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Jackie Huntington  
Head of teaching and learning  
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Dear Mrs Huntington

### **Short inspection of Chudleigh Knighton Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 28 February 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in March 2012.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school has contributed well to, and has benefited from being a member of, the First Federation multi-academy trust. This partnership has enabled the school to sustain an uncompromising and supportive learning community where pupils develop self-confidence and thrive emotionally and academically.

You have made productive use of widened training opportunities to improve the skills of teaching and support staff. Since the previous inspection, you have successfully established new procedures for assessing progress. This is enabling teachers to give clear and accurate guidance to pupils about how to improve their work. Teachers also provide pupils with stimulating learning experiences that sustain their full interest and engagement in learning.

The previous inspection identified that some pupils' handwriting did not meet the standards of presentation in the school's policy to write in cursive script. You have successfully addressed this area for improvement and have brought the quality of pupils' handwriting to a very good standard. You recognise, though, that there is more to do to improve pupils' spelling, especially that of boys.

Parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, say they are extremely happy with the school. They indicated that Chudleigh Knighton has become a school of choice for a significant number of parents because of the care and attention that pupils receive.

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

Keeping pupils safe is given high emphasis across the school. Staff ensure that checks on adults who work at the school are completed appropriately, guided by the school's well-established procedures. Staff receive regular and comprehensive training about safety matters. This ensures that staff understand their responsibilities, know how to respond to pupils' needs and report any concerns they may have to keep pupils safe.

When questioned pupils confidently explained what they would do and who they would contact if they ever feel worried or concerned about their own safety, or that of others. In addition, pupils commented that 'Teachers listen to what we have to say and respect us and so we respect them.'

You and the designated safeguarding leaders sustain close contact with parents and outside agencies as the need arises. Over the past year, you have worked effectively with individual families and outside specialists to keep a 'watching brief' on absent pupils and have significantly reduced persistent absence.

## **Inspection findings**

- The first line of enquiry was to examine how you ensure that boys in the early years are enabled to achieve as well as girls, particularly in developing their early writing skills. We found that school assessments show that children enter the Reception class with lower than typical mark-making and writing skills. Current assessments show an increased, and above-average, proportion of children making the positive progress needed to achieve a good level of development by the time they leave Reception. However, boys' writing skills lag behind their development of other knowledge and skills.
- Your early years leader, with specialist support from the academy trust, is successfully tackling this aspect by stimulating boys' engagement in learning. For example, role play in the class 'police station' and writing sand recipes in the outdoor 'mud kitchen' are quickening children's progress. You recognise that there is more work to be done to help children form letters more accurately and achieve better outcomes in writing.
- We examined what leaders and teachers in key stage 2 are doing to improve boys' progress in writing so that it more closely matches their stronger progress in reading and mathematics. We also investigated the impact of the school's work to develop boys' ability to spell words accurately.
- You have recognised that boys' progress in writing has not been as strong as in reading and mathematics. To tackle this aspect, you have ensured that pupils' handwriting, especially through key stages 1 and 2, is consistently taught and developed successfully. This is enabling them to write more fluently and at length.
- Boys, as well as girls, are now inspired to write about interesting topics and texts. For example, pupils eagerly described how they conduct surveys to

decide on and then plan their 'virtual visits'. As a result, pupils present their work well. They write expressively and descriptively with increasing accuracy.

- Teachers check and correct misspelt words in line with the school's marking policy. However, we identified that there is still more to do to improve pupils' ability to spell words accurately. This is because spelling is a noticeably weaker element in boys' writing across key stage 2. Boys in particular still too often guess rather than apply the skills they have been taught when spelling a new word. Their spelling is not at the expected level for their age and is limiting their attainment in writing.
- We examined the degree to which pupils improve their own learning. We observed that pupils respond extremely well to the teachers' very supportive feedback. For example, pupils in all classes relish explaining their ideas when answering teachers' questions and during discussions. Across the school, pupils also take great care in ensuring that their work is neatly written, well set out and completed.
- We also identified that pupils take care when checking and correcting their work. For example, pupils develop and use grammar and punctuation accurately when writing. Pupils also develop strong basic numeracy skills and apply them well to solve problems in mathematics.
- Older pupils enjoy deepening their reasoning skills in mathematics and constructing their own problems to solve. However, teachers are not ensuring that some of the most able pupils achieve the greater depth of skill and understanding in writing and mathematics that they reach in reading.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- children's early writing skills in Reception are developed so that more children, especially boys, make rapid progress to achieve and exceed the early learning goals in writing by the time they enter Year 1
- the accuracy of pupils' spelling, especially boys' across key stage 2, is improved
- teachers provide appropriate challenge to ensure that the most able pupils' reflective learning skills are further extended so that more of them achieve a greater depth in their writing and mathematics.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the executive board, the director of education for the diocese of Exeter, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Devon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Alexander Baxter  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the deputy head of teaching and learning and other school and academy staff holding leadership responsibilities. I also met with the chief executive officer and the chair of governors and other representatives of the academy and school governing body. I visited classrooms with you, where we talked to pupils and examined their work in books and took note of their learning. Together we scrutinised samples of pupils' work in books. I talked with individual pupils, and teaching and support staff, during the morning and lunch breaks. I also took account of the 25 responses to the Ofsted online Parent View survey. In addition, I met several parents before the school day. I examined a range of documents, especially those relating to safeguarding, pupils' attendance and progress, and school self-evaluation and development.